

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 19, 2019

The Honorable R.D. James  
Assistant Secretary of the Army - Civil Works  
Department of the Army  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Assistant Secretary James and Director Mulvaney:

Communities and coastlines across Michigan have been battered by flooding and erosion as a result of record high water levels on the Great Lakes and inland waterways. Extreme weather events have damaged property, harbors, beaches, roads, and critical infrastructure. It is imperative that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continue to help our communities address these near- and long-term challenges that stem, in part, from the climate crisis. This begins with the USACE allocating funding in the FY2020 work plan for these and other actions that will help Michigan communities:

- **Coastal Erosion**

The USACE has the authority to help address significant erosion around ports and coastlines across Michigan. We understand this authority extends to Grand Haven, Grand Traverse Bay, Harrisville, Holland, Lexington, Ludington, Muskegon, New Buffalo and South Haven. We ask that sufficient funding be included in the work plan to enable the USACE to address erosion in these and any other areas of Michigan in which the USACE possesses the authority to act.

- **Maintenance Dredging**

The Administration's FY2020 budget contains significant gaps in funding to address dredging needs at harbors across Michigan. It is our understanding that there is a \$4 million shortfall in the amount needed to dredge commercial harbors in Holland, Marquette, Monroe, and Ontonagon. In addition, another \$8.42 million is needed to dredge 14 recreational harbors across the state, including: Arcadia, Charlevoix, Clinton River, Leland, Little Lake, New Buffalo, and Pentwater. We urge the USACE to include this additional funding in the work plan to ensure access to these harbors that are critical to our local and state economies.

- **Technical Assistance**

Robust funding is needed in the FY2020 work plan for the Flood Plain Management Services (FPMS), Planning Assistance to States (PAS), and Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies (FCCE) programs. These programs are critical to assisting communities across Michigan with planning needed to protect against extreme weather events and flooding. We understand that seven counties in Michigan are already receiving technical assistance from the USACE. The FPMS program alone is being utilized by the USACE to assist with flood and storm

water studies in Antrim County, Detroit, Kentwood, Meridian Township, and Mt. Pleasant.

In addition to the FPMS, PAS, and FCCE programs, we ask that funding be included for the Tribal Partnership Program (TPP). In Michigan, the TPP program is currently being utilized for the Bay Mills Shoreline Erosion Study to develop solutions to protect Tribal lands and a known burial ground.

With the frequency and severity of extreme weather events projected to increase as a result of the climate crisis, the importance of programs like FPMS, SAP, TPP, and FCCE will only grow. Sufficient resources should be provided to these programs in the upcoming work plan to enable the USACE to provide much needed technical assistance to communities and Tribes across Michigan.

- **Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study**

We again join with calls from a bipartisan group of lawmakers across the Great Lakes region in urging the USACE to fund this study in the upcoming work plan.

The Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study, proposed by the USACE, in consultation with Great Lakes states, would be a first-of-its-kind effort to develop a coordinated strategy to manage and protect the Great Lakes and its 5,200-mile coastline from these threats. Proponents for the study include seven Great Lakes states, three USACE Districts (Chicago, Detroit, and Buffalo), and the USACE's Great Lakes and Ohio River Division. It also has the support of the Great Lakes Commission and several federal agencies with missions in coastal management, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Despite Congress formally authorizing the study as part of the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (Sec. 1219 of P.L. 115-270), the Administration did not include funding in last year's work plan or budget request. To rectify this decision, we urge the USACE to allocate \$1.2 million for the study in the FY2020 work plan.

Thank you both for considering these important requests.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

cc: Lt. General Todd Semonite, Chief of Engineers & Commanding General, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Lt. Colonel Gregory Turner, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District